Cadenus and Vanessa

(1713?, 1726)

The *Shepherds* and the *Nymphs* were seen
Pleading before the *Cyprian* Queen.[1]
The Council for the Fair began,
Accusing that false Creature, *Man.*

The Brief with weighty Crimes was charg'd,
On which the Pleader much enlarg'd;
That *Cupid* now has lost his Art,
Or blunts the Point of ev'ry Dart;
His Altar now no longer smokes,
His Mother's Aid no Youth invokes:
This tempts Free-thinkers[2] to refine,
And bring in doubt their Pow'r divine;
Now Love is dwindled to Intrigue,
And Marriage grown a Money-League.
Which Crimes aforesaid (with her Leave)
Were (as he humbly did conceive)
Against our Sov'reign Lady's Peace,
Against the Statutes in that Case,
Against her Dignity and Crown:
Then pray'd an Answer, and sat down.

The *Nymphs* with Scorn beheld their Foes:
When the Defendant's Council rose,
And, what no Lawyer ever lack'd,
With Impudence own'd all the Fact.
But, what the gentlest Heart would vex,
Laid all the Fault on t'other Sex.
That modern Love is no such Thing
As what those antient Poets sing;
A Fire celestial, chaste, refin'd,
Conceiv'd and kindled in the Mind,
Which having found an equal Flame,
Unites, and both become the same,

In different Breasts together burn,
Together both to Ashes turn.
But Women now feel no such Fire,
And only know the gross Desire;
Their Passions move in lower Spheres,
Where-e'er Caprice or Folly steers.
A Dog, a Parrot, or an Ape,
Or some worse Brute in human Shape,
Engross the Fancies of the Fair,
The few soft Moments they can spare,
From Visits to receive and pay,
From Scandal, Politicks, and Play,
From Fans, and Flounces, and Brocades,
From Equipage and Park-Parades,
From all the thousand Female Toys,[3]
From every Trifle that employs
The out or inside of their Heads,
Between their Toylets[4] and their Beds.

In a dull Stream, which moving slow
You hardly see the Current flow,
If a small Breeze obstructs the Course,
It whirls about for Want of Force,
And in its narrow Circle gathers
Nothing but Chaff, and Straws, and Feathers:
The Current of a Female Mind
Stops thus, and turns with ev'ry Wind;
Thus whirling round, together draws
Fools, Fops, and Rakes, for Chaff and Straws.
Hence we conclude, no Women's Hearts
Are won by Virtue, Wit, and Parts;
Nor are the Men of Sense to blame,
For breasts incapable of Flame;
The Fault must on the *Nymphs* be plac'd,
Grown so corrupted in their Taste.

The Pleader having spoke his best,
Had Witness ready to attest,
Who fairly could on Oath depose,

When Questions on the Fact arose,
That ev'ry Article was true;
Nor further those Deponents knew:
Therefore he humbly would insist,
The Bill might be with Costs dismist.

The Cause appear'd of so much Weight,
That *Venus,* from the Judgment-Seat,
Desir'd them not to talk so loud,
Else she must interpose a Cloud:
For if the Heav'nly Folk should know
These Pleadings in the Courts below,
That Mortals here disdain to love;
She ne'er could shew her Face above.
For Gods, their Betters, are too wise
To value that which Men despise.
And then, said she, my Son and I
Must strole in Air 'twixt Earth and Sky;
Or else, shut out from Heaven and Earth,
Fly to the Sea,[5] my Place of Birth;
There live with daggl'd *Mermaids* pent,
And keep on Fish perpetual *Lent.*

But since the Case appear'd so nice,
She thought it best to take Advice.
The *Muses,* by their King's Permission,
Tho' Foes to Love, attend the Session,
And on the Right Hand took their Places
In Order; on the Left, the *Graces:*
To whom she might her Doubts propose
On all Emergencies that rose.
The *Muses* oft were seen to frown;
The *Graces* half asham'd look'd down;
And 'twas observ'd, there were but few
Of either Sex, among the Crew,
Whom she or her Assessors knew.
The Goddess soon began to see
Things were not ripe for a Decree,
And said she must consult her Books,

The *Lovers Fleta's, Bractons, Cokes.*[6]
First to a dapper Clerk she beckon'd,
To turn to *Ovid,*[7] Book the Second;
She then referr'd them to a Place
In *Virgil* (*vide Dido*'s[8] Case:)
As for *Tibullus*'s[9] Reports,
They never pass'd for Law in Courts;
For *Cowley*'s Briefs, and Pleas of *Waller,*[10]
Still their Authority was smaller.

There was on both Sides much to say:
She'd hear the Cause another Day,
And so she did, and then a Third,
She heard it—there she kept her Word;
But with Rejoinders and Replies,
Long Bills, and Answers, stuff'd with Lies,
Demur, Imparlance, and Essoign,
The Parties ne'er could Issue join:
For Sixteen Years the Cause was spun,
And then stood where it first begun.

Now, gentle *Clio,*[11] sing or say,
What *Venus* meant by this Delay.
The Goddess much perplex'd in Mind,
To see her Empire thus declin'd,
When first this grand Debate arose
Above her Wisdom to compose,
Conceiv'd a Project in her Head,
To work her Ends; which if it sped,
Wou'd shew the Merits of the Cause,
Far better than consulting Laws.

In a glad Hour *Lucina*'s[12] Aid
Produc'd on Earth a wond'rous Maid,
On whom the Queen of Love was bent
To try a new Experiment:
She threw her Law-books on the Shelf,
And thus debated with herself.

—

Since Men alledge they ne'er can find
Those Beauties in a Female Mind,
Which raise a Flame that will endure
For ever, uncorrupt and pure;
If 'tis with Reason they complain,
This Infant shall restore my Reign.
I'll search where ev'ry Virtue dwells,
From Courts inclusive, down to Cells,
What Preachers talk, or Sages write,
These I will gather and unite,
And represent them to Mankind
Collected in that Infant's Mind.

This said, she plucks in Heav'ns high Bow'rs
A Sprig of *Amaranthine* Flow'rs,
In Nectar thrice infuses Bays,
Three times refin'd in *Titan*'s Rays:
Then calls the *Graces* to her Aid,
And sprinkles thrice the new-born Maid.
From whence the tender Skin assumes
A Sweetness above all Perfumes;
From whence a Cleanliness remains,
Incapable of outward Stains;
From whence that Decency of Mind,
So lovely in the Female Kind,
Where not one careless Thought intrudes,
Less modest than the Speech of Prudes;
Where never Blush was call'd in Aid,
That spurious Virtue in a Maid,
A Virtue but at second-hand;
They blush because they understand.

The *Graces* next wou'd act their Part,
And shew'd but little of their Art;
Their Work was half already done,
The Child with native Beauty shone,
The outward Form no Help requir'd:
Each breathing on her thrice, inspir'd
That gentle, soft, engaging Air,

Which in old Times adorn'd the Fair;
And said, "*Vanessa* be the Name,
"By which thou shalt be known to Fame:
"*Vanessa,* by the Gods enroll'd:
"Her Name on Earth—shall not be told.

But still the Work was not compleat,
When *Venus* thought on a Deceit:
Drawn by her Doves, away she flies,
And finds out *Pallas*[13] in the Skies:
Dear *Pallas,* I have been this Morn
To see a lovely Infant born:
A Boy in yonder Isle below,
So like my own, without his Bow,
By Beauty cou'd your Heart be won,
You'd swear it is *Apollo*'s Son;
But it shall ne'er be said, a Child
So hopeful, has by me been spoil'd;
I have enough besides to spare,
And give him wholly to your Care.

Wisdom's above suspecting Wiles:
The Queen of Learning gravely smiles,
Down from *Olympus* comes with Joy,
Mistakes *Vanessa* for a Boy;
Then sows within her tender Mind
Seeds long unknown to Womankind,
For manly Bosoms chiefly fit,
The Seeds of Knowledge, Judgment, Wit.
Her Soul was suddenly endu'd
With Justice, Truth and Fortitude;
With Honour, which no Breath can Stain,
Which Malice must attack in vain;
With open Heart and bounteous Hand:
But *Pallas* here was at a Stand;
She knew in our degen'rate Days
Bare Virtue could not live on Praise,
That Meat must be with Money bought;
She therefore, upon second Thought,

Infus'd, yet as it were by Stealth,
Some small Regard for State and Wealth:
Of which, as she grew up, there stay'd
A Tincture in the prudent Maid:
She manag'd her Estate with Care,
Yet like'd three Footmen to her Chair.
But lest he shou'd neglect his Studies
Like a young Heir, the thrifty Goddess
(For fear young Master shou'd be spoil'd,)
Wou'd use him like a younger Child;
And, after long computing, found
'Twou'd come to just Five Thousand Pound.

The Queen of Love was pleas'd, and proud,
To see *Vanessa* thus endow'd;
She doubted not but such a Dame
Thro' ev'ry Breast wou'd dart a Flame;
That ev'ry rich and lordly Swain
With Pride wou'd drag about her Chain;
That Scholars wou'd forsake their Books
To study bright *Vanessa*'s Looks:
As she advanc'd, that Womankind
Wou'd by her Model form their Mind,
And all their Conduct wou'd be try'd
By her, as an unerring Guide.
Offending Daughters oft wou'd hear
Vanessa's Praise rung in their Ear:
Miss *Betty,* when she does a Fault,
Lets fall her Knife, or spills the Salt,
Will thus be by her Mother chid,
" 'Tis what *Vanessa* never did.
Thus by the Nymphs and Swains ador'd,
My Pow'r shall be again restor'd,
And happy Lovers bless my Reign——
So *Venus* hop'd, but hop'd in vain.

For when in time the *Martial Maid*
Found out the Trick that *Venus* play'd,
She shakes her Helm, she knits her Brows,

And fir'd with Indignation vows,
To-morrow, ere the setting Sun,
She'd all undo, that she had done.

But in the Poets we may find,
A wholesome Law, Time out of mind,
Had been confirm'd by Fate's Decree;
That Gods, of whatso'er Degree,
Resume not what themselves have giv'n,
Or any Brother-God in Heav'n:
Which keeps the Peace among the Gods,
Or they must always be at Odds.
And *Pallas,* if she broke the Laws,
Must yield her Foe the stronger Cause;
A Shame to one so much ador'd
For Wisdom, at *Jove*'s Council-Board.
Besides, she fear'd the Queen of Love
Wou'd meet with better Friends above.
And tho' she must with Grief reflect,
To see a Mortal Virgin deck'd
With Graces, hitherto unknown
To Female Breasts, except her own;
Yet she wou'd act as best became
A Goddess of unspotted Fame:
She knew, by Augury Divine,
Venus wou'd fail in her Design:
She study'd well the Point, and found
Her Foe's Conclusions were not sound,
From Premisses erroneous brought,
And therefore the Deductions nought,
And must have contrary Effects
To what her treach'rous Foe expects.

In proper Season *Pallas* meets
The Queen of Love, whom thus she greets,
(For Gods, we are by *Homer* told,
Can in Celestial Language scold)
Perfidious Goddess! but in vain
You form'd this Project in your Brain,

A Project for thy Talents fit,
With much Deceit and little Wit;
Thou hast, as thou shalt quickly see,
Deceiv'd thy self, instead of me;
For how can Heav'nly Wisdom prove
An Instrument to earthly Love?
Know'st thou not yet that Men commence
Thy Votaries, for Want of Sense?
Nor shall *Vanessa* be the Theme
To manage thy abortive Scheme;
She'll prove the greatest of thy Foes:
And yet I scorn to interpose,
But using neither Skill, nor Force,
Leave all Things to their Nat'ral Course.

The Goddess thus pronounc'd her Doom:
When, lo! *Vanessa* in her Bloom,
Advanc'd like *Atalanta*'s[14] Star,
But rarely seen, and seen from far:
In a new World with Caution stept,
Watch'd all the Company she kept,
Well knowing from the Books she read
What dangerous Paths young Virgins tread;
Wou'd seldom at the Park appear,
Nor saw the Play-House twice a Year;
Yet not incurious, was inclin'd
To know the Converse of Mankind.

First issu'd from Perfumers Shops
A Croud of fashionable Fops;
They ask'd her, how she lik'd the Play,
Then told the Tattle of the Day,
A Duel fought last Night at Two,
About a Lady——You know who;
Mention'd a new *Italian,*[15] come
Either from *Muscovy* or *Rome;*
Gave Hints of who and who's together;[16]
Then fell to talking of the Weather:
Last Night was so extremely fine,

The Ladies Walk'd till after Nine.
Then in soft Voice and Speech absurd,
With Nonsense ev'ry second Word,
With Fustian from exploded[17] Plays,
They celebrate her Beauty's Praise,
Run o'er their Cant of stupid Lies,
And tell the Murders of her Eyes.

With silent Scorn *Vanessa* sat,
Scarce list'ning to their idle Chat;
Further than sometimes by a Frown,
When they grew pert, to pull them down.
At last she spitefully was bent
To try their Wisdom's full Extent;
And said, she valu'd nothing less
Than Titles, Figure, Shape, and Dress;
That, Merit should be chiefly plac'd
In Judgment, Knowledge, Wit, and Taste;
And these, she offer'd to dispute,
Alone distinguish'd Man from Brute:
That, present Times have no Pretence
To Virtue, in the Noblest Sense,
By *Greeks* and *Romans* understood,
To perish for our Country's Good.
She nam'd the antient Heroes round,
Explain'd for what they were renown'd;
Then spoke with Censure, or Applause,
Of foreign Customs, Rites, and Laws;
Thro' Nature, and thro' Art she rang'd,
And gracefully her Subject chang'd:
In vain: her Hearers had no Share
In all she spoke, except to stare.
Their Judgment was upon the Whole,
—That Lady is the dullest Soul—
Then tipt their Forehead in a Jeer,
As who should say—she wants it here;
She may be handsome, young and rich,
But none will burn her for a Witch.

—

A Party next of glitt'ring Dames,
From round the Purlieus of *St. James*,[18]
Came early, out of pure Good-will,
To see the Girl in Deshabille.[19]
Their Clamour 'lighting from their Chairs,
Grew louder, all the Way up Stairs;
At Entrance loudest, where they found
The Room with Volumes litter'd round
Vanessa held *Montaigne*,[20] and read,
Whilst Mrs. *Susan* comb'd her Head:
They call'd for Tea and Chocolate,
And fell into their usual Chat,
Discoursing with important Face,
On Ribbons, Fans, and Gloves and Lace;
Shew'd Patterns just from *India* brought,
And gravely ask'd her what she thought,
Whether the Red or Green were best,
And what they cost? *Vanessa* guess'd,
As came into her Fancy first,
Nam'd half the Rates, and lik'd the worst.
To Scandal next——What aukward Thing
Was that, last *Sunday* in the Ring?[21]
——I'm sorry *Mopsa* breaks so fast;
I said her Face would never last.
Corinna with that youthful Air,
Is thirty, and a Bit to spare.
Her Fondness for a certain Earl
Began, when I was but a Girl.
Phyllis, who but a Month ago
Was marry'd to the *Tunbridge*[22] Beau,
I saw coquetting t'other Night
In publick with that odious Knight.

They railly'd next *Vanessa*'s Dress;
That Gown was made for Old Queen *Bess*.
Dear Madam, Let me see your Head:
Don't you intend to put on Red?
A Pettycoat without a Hoop!
Sure, you are not asham'd to stoop;

With handsome Garters at your Knees,
No matter what a Fellow sees.

Fill'd with Disdain, with Rage inflam'd,
Both of her self and Sex asham'd,
The Nymph stood silent out of spight,
Nor wou'd vouchsafe to set them right.
Away the fair Detractors went,
And gave, by turns, their Censures Vent.
She's not so handsome, in my Eyes:
For Wit, I wonder where it lies.
She's fair and clean, and that's the most;
But why proclaim her for a Toast?
A Baby Face, no Life, no Airs,
But what she learnt at Country Fairs;
Scarce knows what Diff'rence is between
Rich *Flanders* Lace, and Colberteen.
I'll undertake my little *Nancy*
In Flounces has a better Fancy.
With all her Wit, I wou'd not ask
Her Judgment, how to buy a Mask.
We begg'd her but to patch her Face,
She never hit one proper Place;
Which every Girl at five Years old
Can do as soon as she is told.
I own, that out-of-fashion Stuff
Becomes the *Creature* well enough.
The Girl might pass, if we cou'd get her
To know the World a little better.
(*To know the World!* a modern Phrase,
For Visits, Ombre, Balls and Plays.)

Thus, to the World's perpetual Shame,
The *Queen of Beauty* lost her Aim.
Too late with Grief she understood,
Pallas had done more Harm than Good;
For great Examples are but vain,
Where Ignorance begets Disdain.
Both Sexes, arm'd with Guilt and Spite,

Against *Vanessa*'s Pow'r unite;
To copy her, few Nymphs aspir'd;
Her Virtues fewer Swains admir'd:
So Stars beyond a certain Height
Give Mortals neither Heat nor Light.

Yet some of either Sex, endow'd
With Gifts superior to the Crowd,
With Virtue, Knowledge, Taste and Wit,
She condescended to admit:
With pleasing Arts she could reduce
Mens Talents to their proper Use;
And with Address each Genius held
To that wherein it most excell'd;
Thus making others Wisdom known,
Cou'd please them, and improve her own.
A modest Youth said something new,
She plac'd it in the strongest View.
All humble Worth she strove to raise;
Would not be prais'd, yet lov'd to praise.
The Learned met with free Approach,
Although they came not in a Coach.
Some Clergy too she wou'd allow,
Nor quarrell'd at their aukward Bow.
But this was for *Cadenus'* sake;
A Gownman of a diff'rent Make.
Whom *Pallas,* once *Vanessa*'s Tutor,
Had fix'd on for her Coadjutor.

But *Cupid,* full of Mischief, longs
To vindicate his Mothers' Wrongs.
On *Pallas* all Attempts are vain;
One way he knows to give her Pain:
Vows, on *Vanessa*'s Heart to take
Due Vengeance, for her Patron's sake.
Those early Seeds by *Venus* sown,
In spight of *Pallas,* now were grown;
And *Cupid* hop'd they wou'd improve
By Time, and ripen into Love.

The Boy made use of all his Craft,
In vain discharging many a Shaft,
Pointed at Col'nels, Lords, and Beaux;
Cadenus warded off the Blows:
For placing still some Book betwixt,
The Darts were in the Cover fix'd,
Or often blunted and recoil'd,
On *Plutarch*'s Morals[23] struck, were spoil'd.

The Queen of Wisdom cou'd foresee,
But not prevent the Fates decree;
And human Caution tries in vain
To break that Adamantine Chain.
Vanessa, tho' by *Pallas* taught,
By *Love* invulnerable thought,
Searching in Books for Wisdom's Aid,
Was, in the very Search, betray'd.

Cupid, tho' all his Darts were lost,
Yet still resolv'd to spare no Cost;
He could not answer to his Fame
The Triumphs of that stubborn Dame,
A Nymph so hard to be subdu'd,
Who neither was Coquette nor Prude.
I find, says he, she wants a Doctor,
Both to adore her and instruct her;
I'll give her what she most admires,
Among those venerable Sires.
Cadenus is a Subject fit,
Grown old in Politicks and Wit;
Caress'd by Ministers of State,
Of half Mankind the Dread and Hate.
Whate'er Vexations Love attend,
She need no Rivals apprehend.
Her Sex, with universal Voice,
Must laugh at her capricious Choice.

Cadenus many things had writ;
Vanessa much esteem'd his Wit,

And call'd for his Poetick Works;
Mean time the Boy in secret lurks,
And while the Book was in her Hand,
The Urchin from his private Stand
Took Aim, and shot with all his Strength
A Dart of such prodigious Length,
It pierc'd the feeble Volume thro',
And deep transfix'd her Bosom too.
Some Lines, more moving than the rest,
Stuck to the Point that pierc'd her Breast;
And, born directly to the Heart,
With Pains unknown increas'd her Smart.

Vanessa, not in Years a Score,
Dreams of a Gown of forty-four;[24]
Imaginary Charms can find,
In Eyes with Reading almost blind;
Cadenus now no more appears
Declin'd in Health, advanc'd in Years.
She fancies Musick in his Tongue,
Nor further looks, but thinks him young.
What Mariner is not afraid,
To venture in a Ship decay'd?
What Planter will attempt to yoke
A Sapling with a falling Oak?
As Years increase, she brighter shines,
Cadenus with each Day declines,
And he must fall a Prey to Time,
While she continues in her Prime.

Cadenus, common Forms apart,
In every Scene had kept his Heart;
Had sigh'd and languish'd, vow'd, and writ,
For Pastime, or to shew his Wit;
But Time, and Books, and State Affairs
Had spoil'd his fashionable Airs;
He now cou'd praise, esteem, approve,
But understood not what was Love.
His Conduct might have made him styl'd

A Father, and the Nymph his Child.
That innocent Delight he took
To see the Virgin mind her Book,
Was but the Master's secret Joy
In School to hear the finest Boy.
Her Knowledge with her Fancy grew;
She hourly press'd for something new;
Ideas came into her Mind
So fast, his Lessons lagg'd behind:
She reason'd, without plodding long,
Nor ever gave her Judgment wrong.
But now a sudden Change was wrought,
She minds no longer what he taught.
Cadenus was amaz'd to find
Such Marks of a distracted Mind;
For tho' she seem'd to listen more
To all he spoke, than e'er before;
He found her Thoughts would absent range,
Yet guess'd not whence could spring the Change.
And first he modestly conjectures
His Pupil might be tir'd with Lectures;
Which help'd to mortify his Pride,
Yet gave him not the Heart to chide;
But in a mild dejected Strain,
At last he ventur'd to complain:
Said, she shou'd be no longer teiz'd;
Might have her Freedom when she pleas'd:
Was now convinc'd he acted wrong,
To hide her from the World so long;
And in dull Studies to engage
One of her tender Sex and Age.
That ev'ry Nymph with Envy own'd,
How she might shine in the *Grand-Monde,*
And ev'ry Shepherd was undone
To see her cloister'd like a Nun.
This was a visionary Scheme,
He wak'd, and found it but a Dream;
A Project far above his Skill,
For Nature must be Nature still.

If he was bolder than became
A Scholar to a Courtly Dame,
She might excuse a Man of Letters;
Thus Tutors often treat their Betters.
And since his Talk offensive grew,
He came to take his last Adieu.

Vanessa, fill'd with just Disdain,
Wou'd still her Dignity maintain,
Instructed from her early Years
To scorn the Art of Female Tears.

Had he employ'd his Time so long,
To teach her what was Right or Wrong,
Yet cou'd such Notions entertain,
That all his Lectures were in vain?
She own'd the wand'ring of her Thoughts,
But he must answer for her Faults.
She well remember'd to her Cost,
That all his Lessons were not lost.
Two Maxims she could still produce,
And sad Experience taught their Use:
That Virtue, pleas'd by being shown,
Knows nothing which it dare not own;
Can make us without Fear disclose
Our inmost Secrets to our Foes:
That common Forms were not design'd
Directors to a noble Mind.
Now, said the Nymph, I'll let you see
My Actions with your Rules agree,
That I can vulgar Forms despise,
And have no Secrets to disguise.
I knew by what you said and writ,
How dang'rous Things were Men of Wit,
You caution'd me against their Charms,
But never gave me equal Arms:
Your Lessons found the weakest Part,
Aim'd at the Head, but reach'd the Heart.

Cadenus felt within him rise
Shame, Disappointment, Guilt, Surprize.
He knew not how to reconcile
Such Language, with her usual Style:
And yet her Words were so exprest,
He cou'd not hope she spoke in Jest.
His Thoughts had wholly been confin'd
To form and cultivate her Mind.
He hardly knew, 'till he was told,
Whether the Nymph were Young or Old;
Had met her in a publick Place,
Without distinguishing her Face.
Much less could his declining Age
Vanessa's earliest Thoughts engage.
And if her Youth Indifference met,
His Person must Contempt beget.
Or grant her Passion be sincere,
How shall his Innocence be clear?
Appearances were all so strong,
The World must think him in the Wrong;
Wou'd say, He made a treach'rous Use
Of Wit, to flatter and seduce:
The Town wou'd swear he had betray'd,
By Magick Spells, the harmless Maid;
And ev'ry Beau wou'd have his Jokes,
That Scholars were like other Folks:
That when Platonick Flights were over,
The Tutor turn'd a mortal Lover.
So tender of the Young and Fair?
It shew'd a true Paternal Care—
Five thousand Guineas in her Purse?
The Doctor might have fancy'd worse.—

Hardly at length he Silence broke,
and faulter'd ev'ry Word he spoke;
Interpreting her Complaisance,[25]
Just as a Man *sans Consequence*.[26]
She railly'd well,[27] he always knew,
Her Manner now was something new;

And what she spoke was in an Air,
As serious as a Tragick Play'r.
But those who aim at Ridicule
Shou'd fix upon some certain Rule,
Which fairly hints they are in jest,
Else he must enter his Protest:
For, let a Man be ne'er so wise,
He may be caught with sober Lies;
A Science which he never taught,
And, to be free, was dearly bought:
For, take it in its proper Light,
'Tis just what Coxcombs call, *a Bite*.[28]

But not to dwell on Things minute,
Vanessa finish'd the Dispute,
Brought weighty Arguments to prove
That Reason was her Guide in Love.
She thought he had himself describ'd,
His Doctrines when she first imbib'd;
What he had planted, now was grown;
His Virtues she might call her own;
As he approves, as he dislikes,
Love or Contempt, her Fancy strikes.
Self-Love, in Nature rooted fast,
Attends us first, and leave us last:
Why she likes him, admire not at her,
She loves herself, and that's the Matter.
How was her Tutor wont to praise
The Genius's of ancient Days!
(Those Authors he so oft had nam'd
For Learning, Wit, and Wisdom fam'd;)
Was struck with Love, Esteem, and Awe,
For Persons whom he never saw.
Suppose *Cadenus* flourish'd then,
He must adore such God-like Men.[29]
If one short Volume cou'd comprise
All that was witty, learn'd, and wise,
How wou'd it be esteem'd, and read,
Altho' the Writer long were dead?

If such an Author were alive,
How all wou'd for his Friendship strive;
And come in Crowds to see his Face:
And this she takes to be her Case.
Cadenus answers every End,
The Book, the Author, and the Friend.
The utmost her Desires will reach,
Is but to learn what he can teach;
His Converse is a System, fit
Alone to fill up all her Wit;
While ev'ry Passion of her Mind
In him is center'd and confin'd.

Love can with Speech inspire a Mute,
And taught *Vanessa* to dispute.
This Topick, never touch'd before,
Display'd her Eloquence the more:
Her Knowledge, with such Pains acquir'd,
By this new Passion grew inspir'd.
Thro' this she made all Objects pass,
Which gave a Tincture o'er the Mass:
As Rivers, tho' they bend and twine,
Still to the Sea their Course incline;
Or, as Philosophers, who find
Some fav'rite System to their Mind,
In ev'ry Point to make it fit,
Will force all Nature to submit.

Cadenus, who cou'd ne'er suspect
His Lessons wou'd have such Effect,
Or be so artfully apply'd,
Insensibly came on her Side;
It was an unforeseen Event,
Things took a Turn he never meant.
Whoe'er excels in what we prize,
Appears a Hero to our Eyes;
Each Girl when pleas'd with what is taught,
Will have the Teacher in her Thought.
When Miss delights in her Spinnet,

A Fidler may a Fortune get;
A Blockhead with melodious Voice
In Boarding-Schools can have his Choice;
And oft' the Dancing-Master's Art
Climbs from the Toe to touch the Heart.
In Learning let a Nymph delight,
The Pedant gets a Mistress by't.
Cadenus, to his Grief and Shame,
Cou'd scarce oppose *Vanessa*'s Flame;
But tho' her Arguments were strong,
At least, cou'd hardly wish them wrong.
Howe'er it came, he cou'd not tell,
But, sure, she never talk'd so well.
His Pride began to interpose,
Preferr'd before a Crowd of Beaux,
So bright a Nymph to come unsought,
Such Wonder by his Merit wrought;
'Tis Merit must with her prevail,
He never knew her Judgment fail,
She noted all she ever read,
And had a most discerning Head.

'Tis an old Maxim in the Schools,
That Vanity's the Food of Fools;
Yet now and then your Men of Wit
Will condescend to take a Bit.

So when *Cadenus* could not hide,
He chose to justify his Pride;
Constr'ing the Passion she had shown,
Much to her Praise, more to his Own.
Nature in him had Merit plac'd,
In her, a most judicious Taste.
Love, hitherto a transient Guest,
Ne'er held Possession of his Breast;
So, long attending at the Gate,
Disdain'd to enter in so late.
Love, why do we one Passion call?
When 'tis a Compound of them all;

Where hot and cold, where sharp and sweet,
In all their Equipages meet;[30]
Where Pleasures mix'd with Pains appear,
Sorrow with Joy, and Hope with Fear.
Wherein his Dignity and Age
Forbid *Cadenus* to engage.
But Friendship in its greatest Height,
A constant, rational Delight,
On Virtue's Basis fix'd to last,
When Love's Allurements long are past;
Which gently warms, but cannot burn;
He gladly offers in return:
His Want of Passion will redeem,
With Gratitude, Respect, Esteem:
With that Devotion we bestow,
When Goddesses appear below.

While thus *Cadenus* entertains
Vanessa in exalted Strains,
The Nymph in sober Words intreats
A Truce with all sublime Conceits.
For why such Raptures, Flights, and Fancies,
To her, who durst not read Romances;
In lofty Style to make Replies,
Which he had taught her to despise.
But when her Tutor will affect
Devotion, Duty, and Respect,
He fairly abdicates his Throne,
The Government is now her own;
He has a Forfeiture incurr'd,
She vows to take him at his Word,
And hopes he will not think it strange
If both shou'd now their Stations change.
The Nymph will have her Turn, to be
The Tutor; and the Pupil, he:
Tho' she already can discern,
Her Scholar is not apt to learn;
Or wants Capacity to reach
The Science she designs to teach:

Wherein his Genius was below
The Skill of ev'ry common Beau;
Who, tho' he cannot spell, is wise
Enough to read a Lady's Eyes;
And will each accidental Glance
Interpret for a kind Advance.

But what Success *Vanessa* met,
Is to the World a Secret yet:
Whether the Nymph, to please her Swain,
Talks in a high Romantick Strain;
Or whether he at last descends
To like with less Seraphick Ends;
Or, to compound the Business, whether
They temper Love and Books together;
Must never to Mankind be told,
Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold.

Mean time the mournful *Queen of Love*
Led but a weary Life above.
She ventures now to leave the Skies,
Grown by *Vanessa*'s Conduct wise.
For tho' by one perverse Event
Pallas had cross'd her first Intent,
Tho' her Design was not obtain'd,
Yet had she much Experience gain'd;
And, by the Project vainly try'd,
Cou'd better now the *Cause* decide.

She gave due Notice, that both Parties,
Coram Regina prox' die Martis,[31]
Should at their Peril without fail
Come and appear, and save their Bail.
All met, and Silence thrice proclaim'd,
One Lawyer to each Side was nam'd.
The Judge discover'd in her Face
Resentments for her late Disgrace;
And, full of Anger, Shame, and Grief,
Directed them to mind their Brief;

Nor spend their Time to shew their Reading;
She'd have a summary Proceeding.
She gather'd, under ev'ry Head,
The Sum of what each Lawyer said;
Gave her own Reasons last; and then
Decreed the Cause against the *Men.*

But, in a weighty Case like this,
To shew she did not judge amiss,
Which evil Tongues might else report,
She made a Speech in open Court;
Wherein she grievously complains,
"How she was cheated by the Swains:
On whose Petition (humbly shewing
That Women were not worth the wooing,
And that unless the Sex would mend,
The Race of Lovers soon must end:)
"She was at Lord knows what Expence,
"To form a Nymph of Wit and Sense;
"A Model for her Sex design'd,
"Who never cou'd one Lover find.
"She saw her Favour was misplac'd;
"The Fellows had a wretched Taste;
"She needs must tell them to their Face,
"They were a senseless, stupid Race:
"And were she to begin agen,
"She'd study to reform the *Men;*
"Or add some Grains of Folly more
"To *Women* than they had before,
"To put them on an equal Foot;
"And this, or nothing else, wou'd do't.
"This might their mutual Fancy strike,
"Since ev'ry Being loves its *Like.*

"But now, repenting what was done,
"She left all Business to her Son:
"She puts the World in his Possession,
"And let him use it at Discretion.

—

The Cry'r was order'd to dismiss
The Court, so made his last *O yes!*
The Goddess wou'd no longer wait;
But rising from her Chair of State,
Left all below at Six and Sev'n,
Harness'd her Doves, and flew to Heav'n.

Cadenus and Vanessa (p. 782)

(Title): *Cadenus* is an anagram of *Decanus* (Dean). Vanessa, now a popular name for girls, was invented by Swift, constructed from Esther Vanhomrigh: "Van" from Vanhomrigh and "essa" from Esther. Esther (or Hester) Vanhomrigh (1688–1723) was of Dutch descent. An intimate friend and correspondent of Swift, she followed Swift to Dublin from London. The poem is Swift's version of their relationship. The poem was not intended for publication. When manuscript copies of it embarrassingly began circulating in public, Swift described the poem as "only a cavalier business" and "a private humorsome thing" (Corr, III.130). Unauthorized editions were printed in 1726. It is Swift's longest poem.

1. (ll. 1–2): The poem's setting is the Court of Love presided over by Venus ("the *Cyprian* Queen"). Standard contemporary legal jargon is deployed throughout the poem.
2. *Free-thinkers:* anticlerical and deistic rejectors of authority in matters of religious belief.
3. *Toys:* trifles.
4. Toylets: dressing tables.
5. *Sea:* Venus emerged from the sea.
6. Fleta's, Bractons, Cokes: venerable legal authorities. Fleta, a commentary on the English law; Henry de Bracton and Edward Coke were authors of works on English law.
7. Ovid; author of the *Amores* (*Love Poems*) and *Ars Amatoria* (*Art of Love*).
8. Dido's *Case:* story of Dido and Aeneas in the *Aeneid.*
9. Tibullus: Roman elegiac poet whose books of poems, in which women are celebrated, have a love theme.
10. Cowley . . . Waller: Abraham Cowley (1618–67) and Edmund Waller (1606–87), famous and influential seventeenth-century love poets.
11. Clio: muse of history.
12. Lucina: Juno in her aspect as goddess of childbirth.
13. Pallas: The Greek goddess Athene, identified by the Romans with Minerva, goddess of wisdom.
14. Atalanta: In Greek mythology she refused to marry any man who could not defeat her in a foot race. Defeated suitors were killed.
15. *a new* Italian: a new singer for the Italian opera.
16. Compare Rochester's "A Letter from Artemiza in the Towne to Chloe in the Countrey," ll.34–35: "What change has happen'd of Intrigues, and whether / The Old ones last, and who, and who's togeather" (*The Works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester,* ed. by Harold Love [Oxford, 1999], p. 64).
17. *exploded:* rejected, hissed offstage.
18. St. James: a fashionable area near St. James's palace.
19. *Deshabille:* negligent undress; partly dressed.
20. Montaigne: A favorite French author of Swift's.
21. *the Ring:* In Hyde Park, a fashionable place to promenade.
22. Tunbridge: the wells at Tunbridge had long been a popular resort. See Rochester's "Tunbridge Wells" in *Works,* pp. 49–54.
23. Plutarch's *Morals: Moralia.*
24. (ll. 524–25): Swift was some twenty years older than Vanessa. Swift's relations with women often took this tutor-pupil character.
25. *Complaisance:* courtesy.
26. sans Consequence: as if from a man with indifference or in an unassuming way.
27. *railly'd well:* good-humored ridicule.
28. a Bite: a deception or hoax; a lie told in a serious manner designed as a hu-

morous trick or practical joke. See Corr, I.40, where Swift describes this fashionable mode of humor.

29. *such God-like Men:* another echo of Rochester; compare "A Satyre against Reason and Mankind," l. 220: "If upon Earth there dwell such God-like men" (*Works,* p. 63).
30. *In all their Equipages meet:* In all their array and order.
31. Coram . . . Martis: "Before the queen, on *Tuesday* next" (footnote in Faulkner's edition of 1735).